

# Calder High School

Brier Hey Lane, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 5QN

## Inspection dates

15–16 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Calder High School is improving rapidly because the headteacher and his senior team have very substantially raised teachers' expectations of how quickly pupils should make progress.
- GCSE and A-level examination results have risen sharply to above-average levels and represent good achievement.
- Pupils in all year groups are now progressing well and much more quickly than at the time of the previous inspection because teaching, learning and assessment are now much better.
- An accurate tracking system clearly indicates the amount of progress that pupils are making. It enables teachers to focus carefully on any pupils who are not doing well enough.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers and classroom assistants generally cater well for pupils of all abilities but there are times when the highest-ability pupils in Years 7 and 8 could be further challenged.
- Teachers provide pupils with consistently good-quality feedback on their work but not all pupils routinely take advantage of the advice they are being given.
- There is still scope for the school to put more emphasis on the development of many pupils' extended writing, handwriting, spelling, punctuation, grammar and use of technical language in subjects apart from English.
- Good arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare mean that they benefit from effective personal support when they need it.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the site. Usually they present their work well but some pupils' work in science and mathematics is too untidy.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the quality of education that the school provides.
- Students on the well-managed 16 to 19 study programmes recognise that they get a good deal. They make good progress. Increasing numbers are going on to university.
- The headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders work effectively together to ensure that the school continues to improve. There is further scope for leaders to ensure that written work in all subjects is as good as it can be.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that work set for the most able pupils in Years 7 and 8 fully challenges them
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their extended writing in the subjects they study, with due emphasis on handwriting, correct spelling punctuation and grammar and the use of technical language
  - ensuring that the presentation of lower-ability pupils' work, especially in science and mathematics, is as good as it can be
  - checking to ensure that pupils take notice of the feedback they receive on their work and that they improve it.
- Further improve leadership and management by putting into place a system that requires leaders to check pupils' work more rigorously to ensure that it constantly improves and reaches the highest possible standards, given the abilities of the pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The very effective leadership of the headteacher and his senior team has ensured that the school has improved substantially in the last two years. Achievement has risen quickly in response to a relentless focus on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress.
- Leaders measure accurately how well the school is doing and set appropriate agendas for improving the quality of education that it provides. In this respect, it draws regularly on the expertise of the local authority, whose officers are always available to give advice and verify that intended improvements have fully materialised.
- The enthusiastic and capable middle leaders have played their part well in ensuring that the school has continued to improve. For example, they have ensured that GCSE and A-level results in their subjects have risen substantially compared with the time of the previous inspection.
- Strong leadership and management of teaching ensure that classroom practice continues to improve. Classroom observations identify effective features of lessons and aspects that can be further improved. Arrangements for the professional development of members of the teaching staff strongly underpin improvements in the classroom. The Calder Learning Trust plays its part too. It enables leaders to share experiences with another secondary school and exchange ideas and expertise.
- Leaders still need to ensure that pupils' written work is as good as it can be, given their starting points and abilities. There is currently considerable scope to improve the presentation of pupils' work and the quality of their extended writing.
- Good morale among members of staff means that there is a common aim to ensure that pupils do as well as they can and that the school shakes off the previous image of one that is not doing well enough.
- Good welfare arrangements mean that equal opportunities are promoted strongly. In treating all pupils as individuals and tracking their progress carefully, leaders ensure that they all develop well, both academically and personally. Strongly improving provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities means that their progress is precisely monitored and is accelerating.
- Leaders use the school's allocation of pupil premium funding well in ensuring that the difference between the academic performance of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils continues to reduce. Good use of the school's Year 7 catch-up funding ensures that most pupils who are behind where they should be when they join the school soon progress substantially in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported and embedded into the curriculum, enabling them to make good academic and personal progress. The school offers a wide range of subjects for GCSE and 16 to 19 study programmes, so pupils have a good choice of options. A very well-structured careers programme enables pupils to have a clear idea of the next steps they could take, the world of work and the opportunities that are available to them.

- Teachers provide plenty of guidance in terms of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain through discussion of topics such as democracy, government, voting and the wide variety of faiths and customs that are to be found across the land.
- The online parental questionnaire indicates a high level of satisfaction with the quality of education that the school provides. Typical of the large number of positive free text messages received was 'Calder High is a brilliant school. It is well led and managed. My child does well and is happy.'

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is good. Governors have an accurate view of what the school does well and what still needs to be done.
- They probe and challenge as appropriate and do all they can to ensure that the quality of education continues to rise. They play their part in ensuring that the performance management arrangements follow intended procedures.
- Governors know how the school's pupil premium is used and understand how it is having an impact on the academic performance of disadvantaged pupils.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are rigorous systems in place that members of staff implement consistently.
- The site is secure and supervision of pupils is managed well, whether they are in classrooms, moving around the school or socialising at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Arrangements for checking on the identities of all adults who have access to pupils are fully effective, as are arrangements for the issuing of passes to visitors.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved substantially in response to the much higher expectations of senior staff. A sense of urgency has resulted in the promotion of more consistently good classroom practice and the elimination of many previous weaknesses.
- It is very clear that teachers and classroom assistants now have far greater expectations of what pupils can and should achieve in lessons. Regular homework provides good opportunities for consolidation and development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topics they are studying.
- Typically, teachers and their assistants manage their classes well. They plan work for their pupils carefully and ensure that lesson time is used well. They usually check that pupils have understood new work through effective questioning.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well in lessons because teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations of their behaviour. Just very occasionally, pupils become restless when the pace of learning is too slow.

- Teachers provide pupils with regular and meaningful feedback on their work, in accordance with the school's policy. Where pupils really think carefully about the advice they are given, it is clear that improvements in their work materialise, for example in history and geography. Unfortunately, not all pupils respond to teachers' advice because there is inconsistency across subjects in the way that members of staff check to see whether work has improved as a result of marking and feedback.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to read, particularly in form periods and English. As a consequence, pupils' reading is a strong feature in their learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from teaching that increasingly focuses on the best ways to enable them to learn. Members of staff carefully check their ability to read and provide extra assistance for those who fall behind. The success of this work is reflected in the way that many of the school's most needy and disadvantaged pupils can read aloud with confidence and expression.
- The teaching of the school's most able pupils has improved substantially since the previous inspection, where it was highlighted as a focus for development. In Years 10 and 11 and the 16 to 19 study programmes, teachers now frequently challenge these pupils to produce work of the highest quality. It is in Years 7 and 8 that provision is more variable. There is still room in some lessons in these two year groups for the most able pupils to be provided with more challenging tasks.
- Many teachers ensure that pupils present their work neatly, with due concentration on good extended writing and the correct use of technical language, spelling, grammar and punctuation, but practice varies throughout the school. Extended writing is not universally well promoted and there are too many instances of incorrect key spellings, a lack of punctuation and grammatical errors remaining unchallenged in some pupils' work.
- Similarly, there are many instances of teachers ensuring that pupils' work in science and mathematics is neatly produced and logically presented, with carefully drawn diagrams, but some pupils' untidy work is not challenged effectively.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils become much more mature and aware of the needs of others as they move through the school. The strong programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development pervades the entire curriculum and very effectively supports pupils to increase in confidence and acquire new skills and competences. A wealth of planned activities and extra-curricular sport and music are particularly successful in this respect.
- Pupils really do value the amount of help and support that members of staff provide. They know that there is always an adult on hand to help in times of need. While many pupils are keen to extend their studies way beyond the classroom, others are still rather dependent on their teachers for direction, even in Years 10 and 11.
- Good levels of adult supervision at break and movement times ensure that pupils are kept safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and fully recognise that it has

improved substantially since the previous inspection, particularly in respect of the elimination of poor conduct from a minority of pupils. They say that bullying is rare and that, if it does occur, then they are confident that members of staff will deal with it effectively.

- Leaders ensure that the very small number of pupils who attend vocational courses at college attend regularly, are kept safe and progress well towards the qualifications necessary for their chosen careers.
- Pupils confirm that the school makes great efforts to teach them about all potential threats to their welfare. There is a strong emphasis on e-safety, drugs, alcohol and the dangers of meeting strangers.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in response to teachers' and classroom assistants' high expectations of them, whether they are in lessons, moving around the site, having lunch or socialising at breaktimes. They have due regard for the safety of others.
- There are good and productive relationships between pupils and the adults who work with them. Pupils fully respect their teachers and usually make every effort to do their best. Only very occasionally do they become restless in class when they become bored because they are given too long to complete tasks.
- Many pupils take a pride in their work and set it out well, but some work, often produced by lower-ability boys, is rather untidy.
- Pupils are polite and helpful. They demonstrate a pride in their school and their appearance. They are keen to explain how the school has improved and that they now have consistently much better lessons than previously. This is partly because behaviour is now much better and lessons proceed without any disruptions.
- Exclusions for poor conduct have reduced quickly since the previous inspection. They are now quite low. Pupils from all backgrounds get on together in a very harmonious fashion. Racist or homophobic incidents are very rare and bullying is at a low level. A typical response from pupils was 'This is a school where everyone respects each other.'
- Attendance of pupils is improving in response to the efforts that the school makes to contact all families when pupils are absent, particularly those facing challenging circumstances. Attendance this year has risen to just above average levels and persistent absence has fallen to below average. Punctuality to school and lessons is generally good but there are a few pupils who arrive late in the morning without reasonable excuses.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- GCSE and A-level results in 2016 improved considerably compared to those of previous years and reflected good achievement by the school's pupils. More pupils than previously had the qualifications necessary for entry to the academic 16 to 19 study programmes and more learners gained qualifications for entry to university. GCSE

results in English reflected good progress over five years but those in mathematics were more average.

- In 2016 at GCSE, middle-ability pupils did particularly well and higher-ability pupils gained results at expected levels, but lower-ability pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, underachieved. The difference in performance between the school's disadvantaged pupils and other pupils reduced but it was still relatively large.
- The school used its pupil premium funding well to ensure that the disadvantaged pupils as a whole did as well as other pupils nationally from the same starting points. The middle- and higher-ability disadvantaged pupils' performance masked the weaker results of the lower-ability group. The school's pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also gained results which indicated that they had achieved results in line with those of other pupils nationally from the same starting points.
- At GCSE and A level in 2016, pupils who speak English as an additional language gained results which were just as good as other pupils in the school.
- Current progress data indicates that pupils in Years 10 and 11 are expected to do at least as well as the previous cohort and possibly better. These are well-founded expectations because work in pupils' books and folders shows that they have made good progress across the curriculum in the last year. The difference in progress between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school is continuing to narrow.
- Progress being made across the curriculum in all year groups continues to be good. Work in class and in pupils' books indicates strongly that rates of progress are almost universally good and sometimes better than that. Higher-ability pupils are doing well because teachers generally challenge them with more demanding work. Only in Years 7 and 8 is there scope to challenge this group further. The previous underachievement by lower-ability disadvantaged pupils has now been largely, but not entirely, eliminated.
- Many pupils present their written work well but a significant minority produce weak extended writing in several of the subjects they study. These pupils' attention to handwriting, spelling, technical language, grammar and punctuation, for example in science, requires improvement. Lower-ability pupils sometimes produce answers to practice GCSE questions in mathematics that are difficult to follow because they are far too untidy and include poorly executed diagrams.
- Pupils make impressive progress in reading because the school provides them with plenty of opportunity to read widely, both in form periods and in the subjects they study, particularly English. Pupils who join the school with abilities way below expected levels soon start to catch up. By Year 9, even the weakest readers can cope with a 'red top' newspaper, while the most able can read aloud with fluency and expression at an adult level. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also confident readers.
- Typically, pupils enter Year 7 with average attainment. The school challenges each cohort to achieve above-average GCSE examination results. Pupils in all year groups are currently on track to do so.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the 16 to 19 study programmes is very effective. Achievement has improved since the previous inspection because the quality of provision for students has risen. Students now progress towards the grades at A level that other similar students achieve nationally. Some do better than that. Results on academic and vocational courses have risen substantially in the last two years.
- Students benefit from a wide range of options, both academic and vocational, leading towards AS level in Year 12 and A level in Year 13. Very good provision for study means that, when students slip behind the challenging targets that the school sets for them, there is extra help and supervised study time to help them to catch up.
- Leaders and tutors keep a very close eye on students' attendance, punctuality and progress with their studies. The school does all it can to ensure that students meet deadlines for coursework and generally develop into young adults who are ready for the next stage of their education or the world of work.
- Students have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Good-quality advice for careers and application to university ensure that learners have access to information about both local university courses and those that are further afield. Students themselves are very positive about the way that the school supports them and fully recognise that they get a good deal.
- Students who have not passed GCSE English or mathematics with at least a grade C have the opportunity to sit the examination again following significant coaching. In 2016, the results were better in English than mathematics but overall, they were disappointing. Leaders have now put a far more effective course in place and students are making much better progress than previously.
- Good teaching and plenty of effective support mean that most students are successful on their courses. Most students who start courses in Year 12 successfully complete them in Year 13.
- Students feel perfectly safe in school and know how to avoid the potential threats to their welfare posed through the internet, drugs and alcohol. Strong provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps to underpin students' positive outlook on life and its opportunities.



## School details

Unique reference number	107562
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10030850

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,127
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jean Bradbury
Headteacher	Anthony Guise
Telephone number	01422 883 213
Website	<a href="http://www.calderhigh.org.uk">www.calderhigh.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@calderhigh.calderdale.sch.uk">admin@calderhigh.calderdale.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 January and 6 May 2015

## Information about this school

- Calder High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- It provides 16 to 19 study programmes in addition to secondary education in the age range 11 to 16.
- The school works in partnership with Brooksbank School through the Calder Learning Trust.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.

- Around a sixth of pupils are of Pakistani heritage, many of whom speak English as a second language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils is supported through pupil premium funding.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Calderdale College and Maltings College for vocational courses on a part-time basis.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 40 lessons, including five jointly with senior leaders. They observed pupils in all year groups being taught and looked at a wide range of pupils' written work.
- The lead inspector listened to groups of Year 9 pupils of all abilities reading aloud, including some who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior staff, middle leaders, governors, the special needs coordinator, the leader of the 16 to 19 study programmes, other members of staff, pupils from several year groups and a representative of the local authority.
- They looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, development planning, records of pupils' progress and safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors also took account of 158 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 73 responses to the staff questionnaire, 143 free text messages and a few other messages sent into school by parents and carers.

## Inspection team

John Paddick, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Darren Stewart	Her Majesty's Inspector
Natasha Greenough	Ofsted Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Ofsted Inspector

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